TO

The Reverend Mr. *William Freina*;
The Reverend Mr. *Thomas Milner*;
The Worſhipful Dr. *Humphrey Henchman*,
Chancellour of the Dioceſs of *London*;

And to the Worthy

Mr. *John Beaumont*,
Mr. *Edward Colt*,
Mr. *George Woodrove*,
Mr. *John James*,
Mr. *Dan. Horſmanden*,
Mr. *John King*,
Mr. *Francis Stanley*,
Mr. *Thomas Fothergill*,
Mr. *John Furſſe*,

STEWARDS

For the late FEAST of the

SONS of the CLERGY,

THIS

SERMON,

PREACH'D and PRINTED

At Their Requeſt,

Is DEDICATED,

By their moſt Affectionate and

Humble Servant,

William Lupton.

N° 8
1717 K
Ø

1 Cor. xiii. 13.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

THIS Account of *Charity* was occasion'd by an Undue Estimate, which the *Corinthians* had made of their High Qualifications and Endowments. God had Blessed them with a Variety of *Extraordinary* Gifts; But so it happen'd, that, according to the common Frailties and Infirmities of Men, they Misapplied, or Overlook'd the Wise purposes of God, and, having too Little regard to His honour, They had too Much to their Own.

That they might not therefore sink, from the Spirit of *Christ*, into a Spirit of *Envy*

or *Vainglory*, or Intirely devote their Zeal to thoſe *Eminent* Gifts, which were moſt apt to gain Admiration and Applauſe, the *Apoſtle* admoniſh'd them to meaſure their *Eſteem* and *Deſire* of every Spiritual Gift, by the Degrees and Meaſures of the *Benefits* ariſing from it. Accordingly he cloſeth his Account of *Spiritual Gifts* in the xii^th^ *Ch.* with an Exhortation, that they would be Moſt *Zealous* of Thoſe, which were moſt *Uſeful: Covet earneſtly the beſt Gifts*; not ſo much Thoſe, which are moſt Surprizing and Aſtoniſhing, and apt to Adorn Your Characters, as Thoſe which are moſt Conducive to Spiritual Edification; And then it follows, *and yet ſhew I unto You a more excellent way*, the Great Endowment of *Charity*, which is more Excellent and Uſeful, than any Other Endowments or Qualifications, how Glorious ſoever they may appear amongſt You, or how Earneſtly ſoever they may be Deſired by You.

He proceeds therefore, in the following *Ch.* to ſhew *Particularly*, that *Charity* is Preferable to the *Extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit; Which indeed are, in Themſelves, neither *Effectual* to the attainment of Holineſs and Eternal Life, becauſe we find, that Thoſe who have *Propheſied* and wrought *Miracles*

Miracles in *Chriſt*'s name, may Poſſibly be Workers of Iniquity, and therefore finally Condemned: nor yet *Neceſſary* to Salvation, becauſe every Sincere Chriſtian, though not endued with thoſe *Extraordinary* Gifts, will certainly be Saved. And, that he might give the Diſciples a Still Higher recommendation of this Divine Grace, and, at the ſame time, raiſe their Eſteem of thoſe Other Graces, which are abſolutely *Neceſſary* to Salvation, 'tis added, in the Words of the *Text*: *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, theſe three; but the greateſt of theſe is charity.*

From which words I ſhall,

I^ſt. *Give ſome Account of theſe three Graces, conſider'd Severally and Apart.*

II^dly. *I ſhall enquire, how far, and in what reſpects, it muſt be granted, that, notwithſtanding the Neceſſity and Excellency of Faith and Hope, Charity is Preferable unto Both.*

III^dly. *I ſhall conclude with ſome Application.*

I^ſt. I ſhall give ſuch a Short Account of theſe three Graces, conſider'd Severally, and Apart, as the Narrow compaſs of this Diſcourſe will allow. And in repreſenting the Neceſſity of Each, God's Preventing and Exciting Grace, as ever concurring with every

man's Sincere endeavours, is all along to be Suppoſed and taken for granted. And,

1st. In treating of *Faith*, which, conſider'd as a *Grace*, denotes in General an Aſſent unto *Divine Truth*, grounded upon *Divine Teſtimony*, 'tis neceſſary to diſtinguiſh betwixt That Faith, which is the Duty of every Chriſtian, and That, which is reckon'd amongſt the *Extraordinary* gifts of the Spirit; whereby ſome of the Firſt Chriſtians were qualifi'd to caſt out Devils, and to work Miracles. And, notwithſtanding that All Chriſtians are not obliged to This kind of Faith, yet it was a Duty ſtrictly Incumbent upon all thoſe perſons, to whom a *Promiſe* of Extraordinary power was given: And if They did not firmly depend upon ſuch Extraordinary Abilities, ſo Aſcertain'd unto them, *Diffidence* was as much *Unbelief* in Them, as an *Aſſurance* of working Miracles, would be *Preſumption* in Others. To this purpoſe we read, that when our Bleſſed Saviour had caſt out a Devil, and the Diſciples came unto him, *and ſaid, why could not we caſt him out? Jeſus ſaid unto them, becauſe of your Unbelief.* For he had *given them power and authority over all Devils, and to cure diſeaſes.* And though in This inſtance they failed of ſucceſs, through their

Matt.xvii. 20. *and* Mark xvi. 17, 18.

Matt.xvii. 20.

Matt.x. 1. *and* Luke ix. 1.

their Unbelief, yet in many Other inſtances we find their Miraculous *Faith* crowned with Effectual demonſtrations of their Miraculous *Power*. Nor were the Supernatural effects of this Extraordinary Faith Peculiar to the *Apoſtles*, or to the Apoſtolick Age, but were extended into Succeeding * Times, whilſt the Circumſtances of Things required That Power, for the Support and Propagation of the Goſpel.

'Tis ſcarce to be doubted, but that thoſe Other perſons, who did not receive an Immediate *Promiſe* from our Saviour, as the *Apoſtles* did, of a Power to caſt out Devils and to work Miracles, and yet had ſuch a Power Communicated to them, for ends and purpoſes agreeable to the Infinite Wiſdom of God, were by the *Spirit* Bleſſed with an *Extraornary Faith*, a Fiducial *Dependence* upon God, for ſuch Supernatural abilities, as a Previous Diſpoſition to the Exerciſe of them. But ſtill,

---

* Vide Juſt. Mart. in Dial. cum Tryph. p. 247. Edit. Pariſ. — Irenæ. adv. Hæreſ. lib. ii. capp. 56, 57. & lib. v. cap. 6. collat. cum Euſeb. Hiſtor. Eccleſ. lib. v. cap. 7. — Theoph. Antioch. ad Autol. lib. ii. —— Tertullian. ad Scap. & in Apologet. —— Origen. Comm. ab Huet. Edit. Vol. ii. p. 328. & contra Celſ. l. i. & iii. —— Cyprian. ad Demetr. & de Vanit. Idol. —— Lactant. Divin. Inſtit. lib. iv. c. 27. —— Euſeb. Præpar. Evangel. lib. v. c. 1. —— S. Chryſoſt. in Pſ. cx. ——

if

if they had not been ſo Influenc'd, the Want of ſuch a *Faith* had been no more Culpable in them, than the Want of ſuch a *Power*; For the One is a Miraculous gift of the Spirit, as well as the Other. 'Tis no more the *Duty* of a Chriſtian, as ſuch, to *Believe* that he can remove Mountains, than 'tis within the compaſs of his *Strength* to *Remove* them.

Extraordinary, or *Miraculous* Faith was, in ſome particular Circumſtances, the Duty and the Ornament of ſome Particular Perſons; But *the Common Faith* is the Neceſſary condition of *the Common Salvation:* If we do not ſtedfaſtly Believe the Truths revealed by the Goſpel, we have no Right to the Bleſſings promiſed in it. For when our *Bleſſed Saviour* had given commiſſion to his Apoſtles, to *preach the Goſpel*, he preſently Inculcated the Indiſpenſable Obligations of Faith, upon Thoſe, to whom it ſhould be Preached, denouncing unavoidable Condemnation againſt *Unbelievers*. And St. *Paul* ſpeaks plainly of thoſe who *believe not*, as doomed to certain Perdition. And thus the ſame Apoſtle teſtified, that *faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as well as *repentance towards God*, is requiſite to the attainment of Eternal Life; *Acts* xx. 21. And Parallel to this Text is the Character given of the Saints,

Mark xvi. 16.

1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *and* 2 Theſſ. ii. 12.

Revel.

Revel. xiv. 12. *They that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus.* Those therefore who Imagine, that they are not Obliged to Believe the Mysteries revealed in the Gospel, do break through a Principal obligation: And whilst they are Deficient in the Duty of *Faith*, they labour under a Defect, which prevents the Perfection and Acceptance of every Other Duty.

Faith is the very Foundation * of Virtue in a *Christian*; And if This be wanting, his Best performances are as *an house built upon the Sand.* For 'tis unto *Faith* that *Virtue* must be *Added*, if it recommends us to the favour of God; And all Those who call themselves *Christians*, and yet content themselves with *Moral* virtues † alone, and those derived perhaps from no Higher principle, than what the Heathens Acted by, must fall under the character given of the Heathens by the *Apostle*, that *professing themselves to be wise, they become fools.* When God hath Required our Belief, as the Ground of all our Duty, is it not extremely Absurd to conceive, either that we are Obedient unto Him, whilst we Disbelieve, or that He will be

2 Pet. i. 5.

* Theophylac. in Ep. ad Heb. vi. 1. & S. Chrysost. Homil. ii. in Ep. ad Rom.

† Clemen. Alexandr. Strom. lib. i. p. 338. Edit. Oxon.

Gracious

Gracious to us, whilſt we Diſobey him. 'Tis a ſtrange Unhappineſs of Judgment, to *Appropriate* the notion of Duty unto Vertuous Actions, and to think that Nothing is Criminal but Immorality. The Rules of Moral Virtue muſt be Highly eſteem'd, and Inviolably obſerved in their utmoſt Perfection, even in That perfection, which the Goſpel hath given them: But let not the Rule of *Virtue* derogate from the Rule of *Faith*; nor the Neceſſity of the One be preſumed to ſuperſede the Other. *Immorality* renders us Obnoxious to Divine Vengeance; but let us not forget, that *Infidelity* does ſo too: And the Event muſt be, in Both caſes, the ſame, that if *thou haſt rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord hath alſo rejected thee.* Heinous is the Sin of *Envy*, *Extortion*, *Wrath*, *Hatred*, *Reviling*; Heinous every Sin committed againſt our *Brethren:* But ſurely More Heinous muſt that Sin be, which is pointed Directly againſt *God*, and is an Immediate violation of His honour. Let all Thoſe conſider this, who dare to Impugn the *Veracity* of God, and with-hold their Aſſent from what He hath Declared; *for he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar.*

1 John v. 10.

Thoſe who will not yield their Aſſent to any other Truth, but what they can, by the power

power of Reaſon *, form Full notions of, and entirely Account for, are Abſolutely Deſtitute of Faith, and do not Believe at all; For the evidence of Faith is altogether Different from that evidence, which ariſeth from the Nature of Things: In One caſe we are convinced of a Truth, and yield our Aſſent to it, becauſe the Nature and Reaſons of That truth, are evident to our Apprehenſions concerning it; In the Other, we are Perſuaded of a Truth, not becauſe our Apprehenſions and manner of Thinking can entirely reach the *Nature* and *Reaſons* of it, but becauſe it is ſupported by a *Teſtimony*, which we can Depend on. Whoſoever therefore wants This kind of Perſuaſion, is Void of Faith. And if it is not at all implied in Faith, as one of its Conditions, that we ſhould Apprehend the *Nature*, and *Manner*, and *Reaſons* of Things offer'd to our Belief, how comes the Want of ſuch Apprehenſions to be urged in Vindication of Unbelievers? It muſt be a very Perverſe, or, a very Weak way of Reaſoning, when we fail of any Duty, to conclude our ſelves Excuſable, becauſe we are under a certain Incapacity, wherein that Duty is not at all concerned.

* Vide S. Baſil. M. adv. Eunom. lib. ii. vol. ii. pp. 64, 65. Edit. Pariſ. & Homil. in Pſ. 115. vol. i. pp. 313, 314.

Such Men as Generally indulge themſelves a liberty of arguing at this rate, in favour of their Infidelity, concerning Myſteries Revealed, do yet profeſs to believe the Exiſtence of *God*, notwithſtanding that His Nature and Attributes do exceed the Meaſure of their Apprehenſion, and are Confeſſedly Unaccountable. Thoſe mighty Advocates of Human Reaſon, in Oppoſition to Divine Faith, will not eaſily clear themſelves of Inconſiſtency, whilſt One and the ſame Plea, which Equally affects Two different caſes, is vehemently Urged by them in one caſe, and entirely Diſavowed in the Other. The want of clear Apprehenſions, concerning the Nature of *Myſterious Truths*, can be no more an Impediment to the Belief of Thoſe Truths, than the want of ſuch Apprehenſions, concerning *God*, is an Impediment to the Belief of a *God*. Let not Unbelievers therefore any longer Attempt to Shelter themſelves under their Incapacity of *Apprehending*, and *Accounting for*, the Nature of Divine Truths propoſed to them; for Such an Apprehenſion is quite out of the Queſtion, and Foreign to the purpoſes of Faith.

But, though the *Nature* and *Reaſons* of the *Things to be believed* do not fall within our Compaſs of Apprehending, and Therefore

'tis

'tis not Demanded, or Expected, that we ſhould Apprehend them; yet the *Reaſons* and *Obligations* of *Belief* it ſelf are Obvious, and Eaſy to be Underſtood. 'Tis implied in our *Natural* notions of *God*'s Perfection, that he *cannot lye*; And 'tis evident unto *Natural Reaſon*, that Miracles and Prediction are an Abundant proof, that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of *God:* Infidelity therefore, in the Ultimate Reſolution of it, is at once a Violation of *God's Honour*, and our own *Reaſon*. And hence it follows, that all thoſe Unbelievers are under a Plain and Dangerous miſtake, who attempt to Skreen themſelves from Blame and Danger, under a notion, that they are not Capable of Believing; that all men cannot Think alike; and that 'tis no more in their Power, to be of one Judgment and Opinion, than of one Size and Complexion.

Thus do they Delude themſelves, and confirm one another in the Deluſion, not conſidering, That God does as plainly Require the Submiſſion of our *Underſtandings*, as of our *Wills* and *Affections*, to the Word of Truth: That 'tis not Incumbent upon us, to determine the *Nature* of any Myſtery; for then, the State of it muſt needs riſe Differently upon Several men's minds, from their Different and Imperfect ways of Thinking: That

we are not to Debate, whether the Laws of *Faith* are Juſtly Aſſigned by God, and whether the Things which he Commands us to Believe are Proper for us to Believe; for whoſoever takes upon him to do This, *Judgeth the Law*; *but if thou Judge the Law, thou art not a Doer of the Law, but a Judge:* That 'tis not our Buſineſs, to give in our *Opinions*, concerning the Objects of Faith, but our *Aſſent* unto them: That, to declare it Inconſiſtent with our Faculties, to *Believe*, is, to offer unto the *All-ſeeing God*, a Groundleſs and Audacious Pretence: That *God*, who Revealed the Scriptures, *needed not, that any ſhould teſtify of man*; *for he knew what was in man:* That he who beſtow'd our Faculties upon us, and Knows their Capacity and Extent, hath Poſitively enjoyn'd us to receive thoſe Holy Scriptures, as His Own Infallible Word, and Stedfaſtly to Believe them, becauſe they are ſo; and, That whoſoever Refuſeth to Believe, refuſeth at his utmoſt Peril, even at the Peril of Everlaſting Deſtruction.

When Natural Reaſon hath exerted its proper Power, in concurrence with God's Spirit, and anſwer'd its neceſſary Obligation of Embracing, and Depending on the Credibility of Scriptures, and by conſequence the Truth

of

of Every thing therein deliver'd; its Whole Office, with relation to Pure Aſſent, is Accompliſhed. If we fall Short of This, we do too Little; If we attempt More, we run beyond our Juſt Length. For it would not be Duty, but Preſumption, to ſcruple any Particular Truth, becauſe 'tis in its *Nature* Intricate and Abſtruſe, or, to meaſure *God*'s Infinite Knowledge, by the narrow Scantling of our Own. His Teſtimony is an Abundant reaſon of our Dependence; And a Firm dependence upon That Teſtimony is, not only *Needful*, but alſo highly *Commendable* on our Part. The *Belief* of Myſteries is the more Excellent, and Acceptable unto *God*, for this very reaſon, That although they do lie too deep for our Underſtandings to fathom, and we cannot fully Comprehend them; yet we do Humbly, and Freely, and Readily, Check and Reſtrain our own moſt Towering Conceptions, and ſubmit them to the Infallible Spirit of *God*, *Caſting down Imaginations* *, *and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought* † *to the Obedience of Chriſt.* 2 Cor. x. 5.

* ΛΟΓΙΣΜΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝ ΥΨΩΜΑ.

† ΝΟΗΜΑ.

Whilſt

Whilſt we Aſſent to any thing, which we plainly ſee the *Nature* and *Reaſons* of, when it is Related; we do not Aſſent to it, out of Regard to the *Teſtimony* of him who Relates it, but ſhould be under the ſame conviction, if we had no good Opinion of his *Veracity*. When we Aſſent unto ſuch Particulars only, in the Scripture, as we can form *Full notions* of, and do carry their own *Reaſons* ſo plainly along with them, that we ſhould Depend upon the Truth of them, from our own *Reaſonings* concerning them, though they had not been Eſtabliſhed upon the foundation of *Divine Teſtimony*; we do not pay much Honour to *God*, by Aſſenting to them. But, when the Scripture propoſeth to us certain Doctrines, which, though they imply no *Contradiction*, and therefore are not *Impoſſible*, nor by Conſequence *Incredible*, are yet ſo *Difficult* and *Myſterious*, that they are unaccountable by Us, and we can, by no means raiſe *Adequate* conceptions of them; If we do firmly Believe ſuch Truths as Theſe, for This reaſon alone, that they are Deliver'd in the *Word of God*, We do then teſtify a Profound Senſe of *Honour* for *God*, ſubmitting our Beloved Reaſon it ſelf to His Teſtimony, and Relying Intirely upon Him, as the *Author of Truth*; out of pure

pure Duty and Deference to Him, in Caſes, which we are abſolutely Unable to reſolve our ſelves.

But after all; neither the *Neceſſity*, nor the *Excellency* of any Single Duty does Imply, that it is of it ſelf Sufficient unto Salvation. If we do not intirely Aſſent to the Truth Revealed, we ſhall be found Inexcuſable, in *the great and terrible day of the Lord*; And when we have fulfilled this Fundamental Duty, and do ſtedfaſtly *Believe* the Truth, if we do not, in all reſpects, *Obey the Truth*, we ſhall be found Unfaithful and Inexcuſable ſtill. Though *Faith* Begins in the *Underſtanding*, it muſt not Finally Terminate there, but bring down its Influences to the *Will* and *Affections*, and cannot be Imagined to *have its perfect work in us, that we may be perfect and intire*, till we become *Holy in all manner of converſation*. And therefore thoſe places of Scripture which aſcribe our Salvation unto *Faith*, are to be underſtood of that Perfect and efficacious * Faith, which is Productive of a Holy Life. *For, as the body without the Spirit is dead; ſo faith without works is dead alſo*, and cannot be a Proper and James ii. 26.

* Πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ΕΝΕΡΓΟΥΜΕΝΗ. Gal. v. 6.

Sure

Sure foundation of Chriſtian *Hope*; which is the

II. *Second Grace to be conſider'd*, and which conſiſts in a Juſt and Joyful Expectation of That Happineſs, which *God* hath promiſed in the Holy Scripture. As the Object of our *Faith* is Supernatural *Truth*; ſo the Object of our *Hope* is Supernatural *Good*. The One is a Firm Dependence upon the Certainty of *God*'s Being, and of Things revealed; the Other, a firm Expectation of *Seeing him as he is*, and of enjoying all the Bleſſings he hath Promiſed. The One is our Duty; the Other our Encouragement and Inducement to it. And This alſo becomes a Duty, Conſequentially, and upon Suppoſition of our Diſcharging the Other. For, as we are ſtedfaſtly to *Believe*, that *God* hath Determin'd to Beſtow the Bleſſings, which are Tender'd to us in the Scripture; ſo are we aſſuredly to *Expect* thoſe Bleſſings, which He hath Determin'd to Beſtow.

And as thoſe Bleſſings are Different in their Greatneſs and Perfection; there is a ſuitable Difference in them, as they are the Objects of our *Hope*. The Bliſsful Enjoyment of *God*, in a Future State, is the Higheſt and moſt Deſirable Bleſſing, and, Therefore the *Principal* Object of our *Hope*; which

St.

St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, *Rom.* v. 2. *By whom we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.* Thoſe *Directions* and *Aſſiſtances*, which are the Means of attaining Eternal Happineſs, though they be Divine Vouchſafements which we can never ſufficiently value, are yet Inferiour to that Happineſs it ſelf, and are Therefore a *Secundary* object of our *Hope*. So we find the Apoſtle expreſſing his *Hope* of Divine Grace, whereby he might be enabled to Perſevere in his Duty, howſoever Difficult or Hazardous it might be; *Phil.* i. 20.

The *Principal* Hope of a Chriſtian, or, the firm Expectation of Everlaſting Felicity, is a *Conditional* Duty, and Properly found in Thoſe alone, who ſincerely Obſerve the Divine Commands. And in Such perſons 'tis a Duty, as of Neceſſary Obligation, ſo likewiſe highly *Excellent* and *Acceptable* upon Two accounts; Firſt, becauſe 'tis an intire Reliance upon God's *Power*, *Goodneſs* and *Fidelity*, for Favours Future and Unſeen, and Thoſe ſuch, as are in pure Humane appearance ſcarce to be Expected, and no otherwiſe to be Firmly Depended on, than from an Aſſurance of the *Power*, and *Goodneſs*, and *Faithfulneſs* of God. Thus thoſe Full meaſures of *Hope*, which crowned *Abraham's Faith*, were in the moſt Signal manner Ap-

Rom. iv. 18, 22. proved and Accepted. *For againſt hope he believed in hope*; *And therefore it was Imputed to him for Righteouſneſs.* And the Excellency of this Divine Grace is ſtill Further Evident from the Bleſſed Influence, which it is Apt to have, in concurrence with the Operations of the Holy Spirit, upon mens Lives and Actions. *For every man that*
1 Joh. iii. 3. *hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure*; Does not only conſider the Neceſſity of mens leading Holy Lives, in order to Proper *Hope*, but is inſtigated and Excited by it, to Fulfil the conditions of it; and is ſtrengthen'd and ſupported * by it under all the Difficulties and Conflicts of the Chriſtian Life.

But, though this Virtue be repreſented, in General, as a *Conditional* Duty; yet that Limitation is to be looked upon, in a Different View, with regard to the Different Circumſtances of Good and Bad men. For when thoſe Conditions, which are the Ground of it, are Actually performed, as they are by

* *St.* Paul *ſpeaks of* Hope *as the* Anchor of the Soul, *and an* Helmet. *Accordingly St.* Chryſoſtom, Expoſ. in Pſ. ix. *and his moſt Pious and Excellent Diſciple,* Iſidor. Peleuſ. lib. ii. ep. 17. *have in moſt Significant words expreſſed the Mighty Power of Hope, as rendring Men Steddy and Impregnable, under the moſt violent Aſſaults of Temptation.* Vide etiam S. Chryſoſt. in Pſ. xlv. & Homil. ad Pop. Antioch. 2.

all

all Sincere Chriſtians, the Obligation of the Duty upon Them becomes *Abſolute*. But the relation, which it bears to Diſobedient men, is purely *Conditional*; And it cannot be either Neceſſary, or Allowable in Them, to hope for Salvation, but upon Condition that they ſhall attain a State of Sincere Obedience, which they have not already attain'd. And yet even this *Conditional* and Diſtant Hope ſhould, in all Reaſon, be very conducive to their Reformation; For what Reaſonable man would not be very Strongly inclined to Obedience, ſince his Obedience will lead him, firſt, into the Comfortable and Certain *Expectation* of Eternal Bliſs, and afterwards into the *Enjoyment* of it.

The ſame thing is obſervable of *Hope*, in reſpect of its *Secundary* Object, the Influences of the *Holy Spirit*, enabling men to *work out their Salvation*. For though the Conſtant Aids of the Spirit are not otherwiſe to be Hoped for, than upon Condition, that they be duly Applied and Uſed; yet every Faithful Servant of God, having Already Anſwer'd that condition, may, under his *Preſent* State, depend *Abſolutely* upon them: And ſuch a Dependence is in Him a Neceſſary Duty. But the Hope of ſuch meaſures of Grace, as are Sufficient to the Accompliſh-

ment of the Spiritual Life, can no otherwiſe appertain to an Impenitent Sinner, who hath all along Reſiſted the Holy Spirit, than in a way ſtrictly *Conditional:* He cannot Juſtly take up a Firm Expectation of ſuch Full and Effectual meaſures of Grace, without Suppoſing himſelf to become Sincere and Faithful in a Future Uſe and Improvement of thoſe means, which he hath hitherto Neglected and Abuſed. And even This Hope, Remote as it is, muſt needs be a Weighty and Forcible Inducement to Repentance and a Holy Life; For what man, in his Sound mind, would not ſincerely endeavour to become Holy and Happy, when the *Sincerity* of his Endeavours is the Only thing required, on His Part, in order to the *Sufficiency* and *Succeſs* of them?

Thoſe who are *Faithful* in the Uſe of their Talents, the Abilities which God gives them, whatever thoſe Abilities are, may Juſtly Hope, that the Holy Spirit will Abundantly ſupport them under all the Difficulties of Duty; But whilſt that *Fidelity* is wanting, an *Abſolute* and Firm Expectation of Effectual aids from the Spirit, is not *Hope*, but *Preſumption*, as Properly, as the charge of Preſumption falls upon Thoſe alſo, who flatter themſelves with the Hopes of *Heaven*, whilſt they

they are under the Dominion of Sin. They may poſſibly *Deſire* Happineſs; But *Hope* implies Juſt *Expectation*, as well as *Deſire*; And *That* is Peculiar to the Sincere and Obedient Servants of God. And in Perſons Thus qualified for *Hope*, the Want of it, ſo far as it relates to the Mind, and is not Occaſion'd by any Indiſpoſition in the Body, is owing to the Want of Juſt thoughts concerning *God*, and involves men in the Sin of *Deſpair*.

But there is perhaps Leſs occaſion of inlarging upon the Neceſſity of *Hope*, than of ſome Other virtues, becauſe men are Uſually more apt to *Exceed*, than to be *Defective* in it. Some few Phlegmatick tempers there are, where *Hope* does not eaſily find Admiſſion: But Generally mens Diſpoſitions are of the Sanguin kind, and Apt to carry their Expectations, at leaſt as Far as they ſhould go. We are Commonly as Little moved by thoſe Arguments, which are offer'd for a Proper *Reſtraint* of *Hope*, as by thoſe which are urged for the proper *Extent* of *Charity*; which is,

III. *The Third Chriſtian Grace* to be conſider'd, and which muſt needs be thought very *Extenſive*, ſince this *One* word includes the *Two great Commandments, on which hang all*

all the Law and the Prophets. For *Charity* denotes the Love of *God*, and of our *Neighbours* alſo, for His ſake, and, ſo far as our love of *Them* is grounded upon, and Conſiſtent with the love of *Him*. And the Scripture repreſents *Both* theſe branches of Love, under ſuch Terms of Warmth and Intenſeneſs, that Cold and Languid affections do ſcarce bear the leaſt Reſemblance of *Either*.

We are Commanded to *love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our ſtrength*; Which Implies, That we ſhould very frequently Contemplate the High Perfections, which are in *God*, in order to Raiſe and Preſerve the Higheſt Admiration of them within our Selves: That this Admiration ſhould not affect our *Underſtandings* alone, but deſcend upon our *Hearts*, and move Full Complacency There: That we ſhould be Exceedingly Delighted with the Thoughts of Him, who hath given us our very Power of Thinking: That we ſhould above all things rejoyce in the ſole Author of all our Joys: That his Gracious Forbearance and Loving Kindneſs towards Us, after all our Treſpaſſes and Provocations, ſhould Endear us to the Utmoſt, and draw our Warmeſt Affections toward Him: That our Love of Him, whoſe Goodneſs to us is Boundleſs, ſhould

riſe

riſe to the Higheſt, and admit of no Bounds but its own Incapacity of riſing Higher: That the Enjoyment of Him, in whoſe *Pleaſure is Life*, ſhould fill up the meaſure of our Wiſhes and Deſires, and that every Other enjoyment, which ſtands in Oppoſition to it, or Competition with it, ſhould at once be Neglected and Diſdain'd: That our Love of God ſhould be ſo Delightful to us, as to render us earneſtly Deſirous of Loving him ſtill more, and Earneſt in Praying, that we may be filled with *the love of God ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt given unto us*; and, That we ſhould prove the Sincerity and Fervency of our *Love*, by the Sincerity and Conſtancy of our *Obedience*. *For this is the love of God*, the Proper and Neceſſary Evidence and Effect of Divine love, *that we keep his Commandments*, and Particularly, the *New Commandment*, as it is ſtyled by our Saviour, wherein the *ſecond* Branch of *Charity* is enjoyned: For *this Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother alſo.*

And under This are contained all the Other commandments, which concern our Regards and Behaviour to One another. For ſo the *Apoſtle* expreſſly declares, and on This account adds, that *love is the fulfilling of the law*; Rom. xiii. 9, 10.

that

that is, if *Love* it ſelf be Fulfilled and Perfect; for then 'tis the Model, upon which all our Duties to our Brethren are Formed and Finiſhed. But if This be either totally Wanting, or Confined and Imperfect; then the very Fountain fails, from whence all our Sentiments and Diſpoſitions, as well as Actions, relating to our Brethren ſhould be Derived, and Diffuſed through the Whole courſe of our Conduct towards them.

The Neceſſary and Indiſſoluble Connexion betwixt our Goodwill and our Good Works, betwixt the entire *Love* of our neighbour and proper Acts of *Beneficence* towards him, is in many Other places of Scripture fully repreſented, and hath been very often, and very Accurately treated of, upon this Occaſion. But the *Apoſtle*'s Deſign in This place, is, not ſo much to enforce the *Neceſſity* of Good Works, as to lay the proper *Foundation*, upon which they ſhould be built. *Though I beſtow all my Goods to feed the poor, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing* 1 Cor. 13. 3. *Charity*, as the *Principle* of all our Thoughts and Deportment, is what he is labouring to Fix and Eſtabliſh. All our Behaviour towards our Brethren, be it ever ſo Specious in it Self, or ever ſo Beneficial unto Them, will be to our Selves Unprofitable,

it does not proceed from an Inward Principle of Charity. It ſhould therefore be our Chief Care and Study, to attain and keep up Charitable Thoughts of our Neighbour, and Charitable Affections towards him. And yet it cannot be denied, that men may poſſibly be found in ſuch Circumſtances, that a perfect *Good Opinion* of them can neither be Required by the Law of Charity, nor Conſiſtent with it.

Indeed a Mutual Good Opinion amongſt men is ſo Agreeable, and Lovely, and Deſirable, and, in Moſt caſes ſo Neceſſary, that we ſhould be exceeding Cautious of failing in it, or Diminution of it; that we ſhould be to the Utmoſt Careful of Preſerving and Defending it, as long as ever there is the leaſt Foundation for it to ſtand on, and, that we ſhould be heartily Grieved and Afflicted, when, in any Inſtance, it muſt of *Neceſſity* be excluded.

Many Other branches of Charity are Neceſſary duties, even towards the Worſt of men, whether in reſpect of *Faith* or *Manners*. We are Indiſpenſably bound, moſt Sincerely and Affectionately to Commiſerate their Condition; to weep and mourn for the manifeſt Danger they are in, though they Themſelves are not ſenſible of it; to offer up our moſt Ardent prayers to God for their Con-

verſion, and, to contribute towards that Converſion, according to our Capacities and Opportunities. But ſtill we May, and Ought to be thus Affected to them, without running into an Approbation of them. Habitual and Notorious Sinners have no more Right to our Intire *Good Opinion*, than to our *Imitation* of them. For Charity does not Oblige us to Abandon Common Senſe; And our Bleſſed Lord, the Perfect Pattern of Charity hath taught us, that *the tree is known by his fruit*. Nor can it ever Conſiſt with *Charity*, which ever Implies an Intire *Love of God*, Throughly to Approve of His Open Enemies.

And the caſe is much the ſame, in reſpect of Thoſe who Offend againſt the Rules of *Belief*, as of Thoſe who break in upon the Rules of *Action*. But *of ſome have Compaſſion, making a Difference*. Charity will not ſuffer any one to throw off a Good Opinion of Thoſe, who, though they be Attempted, and Shaken, and become *Weak in faith*, by the Inſinuations and Artifice of Deceivers, have not yet *caſt off their Firſt faith*, but appear Modeſt, and Humble, and Tractable, and Deſirous *to come unto the knowledge of the Truth*. But if any man takes up Heretical opinions, in Oppoſition to the Myſteries plainly

ly propoſed to our Belief in the Scripture, and remains *Obſtinate* and *Perverſe*, and *Incorrigible* in the Profeſſion and Vindication of ſuch his Opinions, and in the Disbelief and Diſavowance of thoſe Myſteries, which God hath required us to Believe; we are no more obliged, by the Law of *Charity*, to entertain an Intire *Good Opinion* of him, than we are by the Rule of *Faith*, to become Unbelievers with him.

We cannot Avoid thinking, though we cannot be Eaſy under the Thought, that men Are Infidels, when they Profeſs themſelves to be ſo: And *Charity*, which always ſuppoſeth a Stedfaſt Faith, and an Inviolable *Love* of *God*, and of the *Truth*, can never Conſiſt with a Perfect Approbation of Thoſe, who do Reſolutely and Notoriouſly Diſobey and Diſhonour *God*, by *Disbelieving*, and *Rejecting*, and *Oppoſing* the Truths, which he Expreſſly Requires them to *Believe*. And This, which is ſo Clear in it Self, appears under as Full a Light, in the *Scriptures*, the Rule of our Duty, in This, as in every Other Particular. What *Opinion* could St. *Paul*, ſo Eminent for his *Charity*, and *filled with the Holy Ghoſt*, be ſuppoſed to have of *Elymas the Sorcerer*, when he thus Addreſs'd himſelf to him: *O full of all Subtilty, and* Acts xiii. 9, 10.

all Miſchief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all righteouſneſs? And what *Opinion* could our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf be ſuppoſed to have of the Corrupted *Scribes and Phariſees*, when he Denounced the ſevereſt Woes againſt them, and ſtyled them, *Blind Guides and Hypocrites, Serpents and a Generation of Vipers.*

Matt. xxiii. 23, 24, 33.

It will eaſily Appear, that there is no room for this notion, which is apt to ariſe from *Good Nature*, or, from a Worſe Principle, in ſome mens minds, That we ſhould ſtill retain a Good Opinion of thoſe, who Differ from us in matters of Judgment and Pure Belief, becauſe in *Heaven* all Differences of Sentiments and Opinions will be Reconciled, and all mens Thoughts, which upon Earth, were wont to Claſh and Interfere, will be reduced to an intire Agreement. A Declaration of this kind, concerning mens Different opinions in this life, ſhould not be made in General terms, but under ſome Diſtinctions and Reſtriction. For, though it be very plain, That mens Differences concerning things *Temporal* muſt ceaſe with the Things themſelves, and will not Debar them of God's Mercy, provided that ſuch Differences be not attended, either with ſuch Outward Behaviour, or ſuch Inward Diſpoſitions

as are Forbid in the *Goſpel*, and, That mens Different *Opinions* concerning Thoſe things of *Religion*, which are Indifferent in their *Nature*, and are not become Neceſſary becauſe *Commanded* by Proper Authority, are Conſiſtent with their Salvation; And, though it be Inconſiſtent with the Joys of *Heaven*, that there ſhould be any Differences of Opinion There; yet This does not at all concern the Wretched caſe of thoſe, who are Obſtinate and Inflexible, in Disbelieving, and Contradicting, and Oppoſing the Principal Myſteries revealed in the Goſpel. For, if the Scriptures be True, thoſe who do not ſtedfaſtly *Believe* them, will never be received into the Manſions of the Bleſſed.

Is it not therefore Neceſſary for every man to conſider Seriouſly and Impartially, whether he does not retain the ſame Good Opinion of Perverſe and Profeſſed *Hereticks* and *Unbelievers*, as if they were not Chargeable with Hereſy or Infidelity, notwithſtanding that ſuch an Opinion of Them is plainly Inconſiſtent with the *Love of God?* Whether he does not Allow Them an intire Liberty of Converſing with him, and take pleaſure in their Converſation, and that without the leaſt Expectation or Deſign of Reclaiming them, notwithſtanding the Appointment of the Ho-

ly

ly Spirit, that ſuch perſons ſhould be *Re-*
Tit.iii.10. *jected*; notwithſtanding that the ſame Holy Spirit hath given us this Direction, *If there*
2 Jo. 10, 11. *come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your houſe, neither bid him God ſpeed. For he that biddeth him God ſpeed, is partaker of his evil deeds*; and notwithſtanding that, *the Love of the Truth* cannot Conſiſt with taking Delight in the Open Adverſaries of it? Whether he does not by his Encouragement of Them, in any wiſe Embolden them to *Perſiſt* in their Errors, and by Conſequence contribute to their Deſtruction? Whether by that Encouragement he does not Advance their Reputation and Eſteem, and by ſo doing plainly render them More Capable of ſpreading their Pernicious Doctrines, and of Seducing their *Brethren?* And, whether his being, in the leaſt, Inſtrumental to the Propagation of *Damnable Hereſies* amongſt his Brethren, whereby they may *bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction*, be not a Plain and moſt Dangerous *Violation* of Charity?

But in all Other caſes, where a Good Opinion of our Neighbours is not thus Neceſſarily Precluded, it becomes a Neceſſary Part of Charity. If they are not Undeniably and Notoriouſly *Immoral*, or *Unbelievers*, we

muſt not Indulge *Jealouſies* or *Suſpicions* that they are ſo; for *Charity thinketh no Evil:* And where Mens Abominations are not Manifeſt and *cannot be hid*, the Rule is, *In lowlineſs of Mind, let each eſteem other better than themſelves.* And if mens Eſteem of their Neighbour were but Equal to the Eſteem they Commonly have of Themſelves, he might very well depend upon their Good Opinion of him; upon their ſetting the Higheſt value on his Good Qualities and Actions; Upon their paſſing the moſt Favourable and Kind conſtruction on thoſe Parts of his Behaviour, which do not appear in the Faireſt Light; and, upon their making the utmoſt Allowance for his Miſcarriages and Infirmities: All which is their Indiſpenſable Duty.

To ſuch Good Opinion of our Neighbour *Charity* requires that we ſhould Add, an Abhorrence of *Injuring* or *Offending* him, and an Eaſineſs and Cheerfulneſs in *Forgiving* His Offences againſt us: A Gentle and Soft, a Condeſcending and Endearing Deportment towards him; A Senſe of Satisfaction and Joy, on account of every thing, that is to Him Satisfactory and Joyful: A Compaſſionate Regard to him in all his Sufferings, and Studious endeavours to Remove them: Fidelity and Amity, in Reproving him for his Vi-

ces

ces and in Exhorting him to Virtue, in Correcting his Miſtakes, and Supplying the Defects of his Knowledge: Earneſt Deſires and Conſtant Labours, to Secure his Right and Redreſs his Wrongs; to Guard him from the Miſchiefs of Calumny and to Advance his Juſt Character; to Support him in his Difficulties and to Relieve his Wants: and, A Readineſs and Delight in Contributing, by all poſſible methods, to his Happineſs in This and a Future State. Thus may we Teſtify, that we are Adorned with *Charity*; A *Grace* Superiour even unto *Faith* and *Hope:* And, in what *Reſpects* it is ſo, I ſhall proceed in the

II. *Second* place Briefly to repreſent. It hath been obſerved, that in ſome Texts of Scripture, *Faith* denotes and implies the Intire Condition of Salvation; And there can be no Compariſon, but that of Equals, betwixt True *Charity* and *Faith*, in This acceptation of it. But when *Faith* is taken Strictly, in either of the other Two Significations of it, the Reaſons of giving *Charity* the Preference to it are very Plain.

Though a firm Aſſent to the Truths Revealed in the Scripture be *Neceſſary*, yet it is not *Sufficient* to the Attainment of Life. Thoſe Qualifications which are Neceſſarily required

required in A Believer, do not Neceſſarily flow from his Belief. *Faith* affects a man's *Underſtanding* alone; *Charity* Corrects and Governs his *Will* and *Affections:* He may Poſſibly yield the moſt ſtedfaſt Aſſent to the Scriptures, without Conforming his Life unto them; But *Charity* renders him Conformable to the Will of *God*, and Uſeful to *Men*, and fills up the Meaſure of his Duty to Both. *Faith* is the *Ground* of all his Acceptable Obedience; *Charity* is the *Completion* of it. The Immediate advantages of a man's Aſſent to the Scriptures do Terminate in Himſelf; The Benefits of his *Charity* do extend to all Other men, who are within the reach of his Beneficial Influence. *Faith* may be found without Any Good Works at all; But Every Good Work is the Immediate Effect of *Charity*. And if we meaſure the Different *Excellencies* of theſe Virtues by the *Duration* * of them, the Pre-eminence of Charity is very Clear. *Extraordinary* Faith, or, the *Faith of Miracles*, beſides that even in the times † when it was vouchſafed, it was Neceſſary only to a Few perſons, and Sufficient

* Chryſoſt. in Ep. 1. ad Cor. Homil. 34. & Gregor. Nyſſen. de Anim. & Reſur.

† Vide Chryſoſt. Homil. 6. in Ep. ad Tit.

to the Salvation of None; thoſe Times of its vouchſafement were very ſhort, and it ceaſed in the firſt Ages of the Church. And *That* Faith, (an Aſſent to the Scriptures) which is a Duty of Univerſal Obligation, will Ceaſe together with our Lives; when the *Obligation* of Duties will Ceaſe, and be ſucceeded by the *Reward* of them. But *Charity never faileth:* The Extent of it is Equal to the Duration, not only of the *Earth*, but of *Heaven.* 'Tis our Duty in This, and will be our Eternal Employment in a Future State. And how Excellent muſt That virtue be which is of Everlaſting Continuance, and the Continuance of which will be the Support and Supply of our Everlaſting Bliſs?

Moſt of theſe Reaſons of Preferring *Charity* unto *Faith*, are likewiſe Reaſons of its Preference unto *Hope*, and are ſo eaſily Applicable, that they need not be Repeated. This Difference indeed is obſervable, that whereas *Charity* is not the Source of *Faith*, but the *Conſequence* of it; *Hope* is the Immediate *Conſequence* of Charity, and Directly derived from it. Our Aſſurance that there is a Future State of Happineſs prepared for Good men, is purely owing to our *Faith*; But the *Hope* of being our Selves Admitted into

into that State, ariſeth Immediately from our being Conſcious to our ſelves, that our *Faith* is Followed and Crowned by *Charity*. *Faith*, ſtrictly ſpeaking, cannot, as to its proper Acts and Exerciſe in the Underſtanding, be either Cauſed or Improved by *Charity*; but *Charity* gives both Riſe and Improvement unto *Hope*. And, on This account, *Charity* is, in a greater Degree, Preferable to *Hope*, than to *Faith*. For though *Faith* without *Charity* be Imperfect, yet we may have *Faith*, from which Charity is to ariſe, before that Happy Effect be Actually drawn from it; whereas *Hope* can neither be Increas'd nor Begun without *Charity*. A man cannot but Love Happineſs ſo as to *Deſire* it; and a good opinion of Himſelf may lead him on to ſome *Expectation* of it; but, if he hath not *Charity*, That *Expectation* muſt prove Vain, and That *Deſire* ſink into Everlaſting *Deſpair*. True *Faith* and *Hope* are Neceſſary and Divine Endowments; But, without *Charity*, there is no colour of Conſolation in the One, nor of Juſtification by the Other.

It remains, that we ſhould proceed to ſome Application of this Diſcourſe. And

1ſt. Since a Stedfaſt *Faith* is no leſs Neceſſary to Salvation, than a *Holy Life*; It

highly concerns us, to *hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.* If it Muſt be, and that Moving occaſion of our Sorrow and Pity cannot be avoided, that 2 Tim. iii. 13, 14, 15. *Evil men and Seducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived:* Nevertheleſs, *Continue thou in the things thou haſt learned and been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt learned them; and that from a child thou haſt known the Holy Scriptures.* Let us Eſteem it, as it ought to be Eſteem'd, an Ineſtimable Bleſſing, that we have been carefully inſtructed in the *Scriptures*, as ſoon as ever we became Capable of Inſtruction; And let us Teſtify our Gratitude, for having ſo Early Imbibed thoſe Sacred Doctrines, by our Firm Adherence to them. Let no Vainglorious and Arrogant, no Bold and Daring, no Artful and Inſinuating, no Deſigning and Fallacious men, who *wreſt the Scriptures to their own Deſtruction* Deceive and draw us into the ſame Deſtruction with Them.

And becauſe our Danger is moſt Apt to ariſe from the Various Interpretations, which have been, or may be given of the Holy Scriptures; the moſt Dangerous Errors and Hereſies being Introduced under the Colour of Sacred Authority; Let us therefore provide

vide for our Safety, by Depending, as it is our Duty to Depend, upon the General and Uninterrupted Senſe of the Chriſtian Church, concerning thoſe paſſages of Scripture, *which are hard to be underſtood*, Concluding, That the Church, which is ſaid to be *the Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, and upon the Authority of which the Canon of the Holy Scripture depends, muſt be a competent Witneſs, if not a Judge, of the *Faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints*, and the long Preſcription * for truth, ſupported by her Written Teſtimony, muſt be better grounds for a private Chriſtian to reſt upon, than any Modern Conjectures; That the Determination of no Single perſon, is Equal to the Determinations of Multitudes, which have Excell'd in Judgment and Learning and Piety: That, beſides the Other Evil and Perilous conſequences of Rejecting the Authority of the Chriſtian Church, Thoſe muſt needs be thought to run into manifeſt Danger of Error, who, in Oppoſition to that Authority, do Depend upon the Judgment of One, or a Few particular perſons, becauſe 'tis ſo Commonly found, both amongſt the Ancients and Moderns, that a man hath been at One time fully per- 1 Tim. iii. 15.

* Vide Tertullian. de Præſcript. adv. Hæret.

ſuaded,

ſuaded, that thoſe things are Falſe, which at Another time he verily thought to be True; For, though the Owning and Retracting of Errors be Neceſſary, and highly Commendable alſo, when it proceeds from no Intereſted Views, but from a Pure Ingenuous Temper, and regard to *Truth*; yet when a man hath given This proof of his Ingenuous Temper, neither He himſelf, nor any Other Conſiderate perſon would for the future Depend upon his Judgment in Difficult points, at leaſt, in Oppoſition to the Church; becauſe he can never be more firmly perſuaded, that he is in the Right, than he hath been already, when he proved to be in the Wrong, and therefore may as well hereafter Deny what he now Affirms, as he now Denies what he Affirm'd before: That it will be Difficult for any Particular perſon, to reconcile that Profound *Humility* which the Goſpel requires, with the Oppoſition of his Own Judgment, to the Judgment of the Chriſtian Church, or, to prove, that he is ſo far guided and governed by the Holy Spirit, as *not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think*: That if Any Particular Perſon may take the liberty of Interpreting by his Own Judgment, in Oppoſition to the Chriſtian Church; Every Other particular perſon, in

Rom. xii. 3.

the

the like circumſtances, may take the ſame Liberty, for the ſame Reaſon: That if All Particular perſons may take that Liberty, they may Poſſibly fix the Objects of Faith in a Direct Contradiction to one another: That, if it be Lawful and Sufficient to ſuch Particular perſons, to Aſſent to the Objects of Faith, ſo fixed by their ſeveral Judgments, it may become Lawful and Sufficient, to Aſſent unto Things which are Falſe; for ſome of the Objects thus Aſſigned muſt be ſo, if they are Contradictory to one another: And, That if it can become Lawful and Sufficient to Any one to Believe a Falſhood, 'tis Neceſſary for *None* to believe the Truth.

It may alſo deſerve our Conſideration, That ſince the Doctrines of the *Trinity*, and of a General Reſurrection, and all the Other Objects of our Faith Neceſſary unto Salvation, are in Some Texts of Scripture ſo Plainly Revealed, that every man of Common Underſtanding, with an Honeſt mind, may eaſily perceive the Certainty of them; 'tis therefore incumbent upon Every man, who would be Saved, to adhere to the Truth ſo Plainly Reveal'd, notwithſtanding that he cannot ſo clearly apprehend the Full meaning of ſome Other Difficult Texts, and notwithſtanding the moſt Plauſible Fallacies which

which are built up
who Pervert them.
to be Interpreted
Obſcure: When t
do ſeem any way
are Eaſy and Plai
and Juſt, as well a
Imagine, that the
ly and Perfectly U
when the Truth o
Clearly appears, le
tations, which ſta
at once Rejected a

2dly, and to Cor
lief of the Script
Neceſſity of it, is
the Attainment of
us, let our *Faith*
Charity, that the
lead us to a Lively
all Faith, ſo that
tains, yet, witho
vain call to the M
and cover us from
though we ſhould b
high as *Heaven*,
can never be Adm
vious, that as no
frequently and Ea

ilt upon such Texts, by those
hem. For Plain Texts are not
eted by those which are more
nen therefore the Obscure ones
way Repugnant to those which
Plain, 'tis highly Reasonable
vell as Modest, in any man, to
the Obscure ones are not True-
tly Understood by him. And
uth of the Gospel Plainly and
rs, let all Glosses and Interpre-
h stand in Opposition to it, be
cted and Despised. But,
o Conclude; Since the Sole Be-
Scriptures, notwithstanding the
t, is not of it Self *Effectual* to
nt of the Blessings proposed to
Faith be fruitful of *Fervent*
the Fruits of our *Charity* may
Lively *Hope*. Though we had
that we could *remove Moun-*
without Charity, we should in
the Mountains, to *fall on us*,
from *the Wrath of God*; Or,
ould be, in our *Hopes*, Exalted as
ven, yet, without *Charity*, we
Admitted There. And 'tis ob-
s no *Branch* of Charity is more
nd Earnestly inculcated in the
Scriptures,

criptures, than the Relief of the I
o there cannot eaſily be found mo
Objects of it, than Thoſe which
or your Tender Concern; Nor
ope that their Cries will ever be
len, if not by Us, who are und
ar and moſt Engaging Obligation
hem.

Indeed the Arguments, which h
ffer'd in favour of This Charity, ar
er and ſo Enlarged, that they do
dmit of any Addition, and have be
ctual, that they do not Want it.
may be expected, that I ſhould ra
nowledge, than Excite Your Libera
uſtice may ſeem to require the On
s *Charity* the Other. And yet eve
s well as *Charity*, ſeems to plead
erſeverance in *your work and*
ve: If in Any caſe theſe words
able to the ſupply of our Neighbou
muſt be in that of Thoſe, who
lore Your Aſſiſtance; *Withhold*
rom them, to whom it is Due, w
the power of thine hand to do i
Vants are very Affecting, and ſo
eſervings too; Wants and Deſervin
ay, in a ſpecial manner, claim a F
nd Affectionate Regard at Your ha

the Indigent;
d more proper
hich now call
Nor can they
er be heard by
e under Pecu-
gations to hear

ch have been
ty, are so Pro-
y do not easily
ve been so Ef-
it. Therefore
uld rather Ac-
Liberality. For
e One, as well
et even *Justice*,
plead for your
and labour of
ords be Appli-
hbour's Wants,
who now Im-
hold not Good
ue, when it is
do it. Their
d so are their
ervings, which
n a Favourable
our hands. For
if

if every man, who hath a Juſt ſenſe of God and Divine Worſhip, hath ever thought himſelf obliged to Miniſter unto the Neceſſities of Thoſe who give *Attendance at the Altar*, what Kind Offices may not Their Diſtreſs'd Widows and Orphans expect from You, who are under the Additional obligation, of ſtanding in the ſame common Relation to the Altar with Them. Let Your *Bowels of Mercies* therefore ſtill yern towards Your Brethren, and let the Influence of the *Holy Spirit*, Graciouſly moving You to Charity and Compaſſion, be Faithfully Obeyed by You; *That he which hath begun a good work in you, may perform it until the day of* JESUS CHRIST; *To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons and One God, be aſcribed all Honour and Glory, now, Henceforth and for ever.* Amen.

FINIS.